

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for automatically maintaining a file system, said method comprising the steps of:

selecting files from the file system for deletion so as to achieve a predetermined usage level for the file system; and

deleting the files that were selected,

wherein the selecting step and the deleting step are performed automatically according to a maintenance schedule.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the selecting step includes the sub-steps of:  
sorting the files using a sorting algorithm to produce a sorted list of files; and  
selecting files beginning at the top of the sorted list until deletion of the selected files would achieve the predetermined usage level for the file system.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the sorting algorithm sorts files by file date or file size.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined usage level specifies a percentage of usage of the file system or an amount of usage of the file system.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined usage level specifies a percentage by which to reduce usage of the file system or an amount to reduce usage of the file system.
6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving the predetermined usage level from a user.
7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of:  
receiving a selection of a main target from the user, the main target identifying a portion of the file system that is to be maintained,  
wherein the selecting step and the deleting step are performed on the main target.
8. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of:  
receiving a selection of at least one additional target from the user, each additional target identifying another portion of the file system that is to be maintained,  
wherein the selecting step and the deleting step are also performed on the additional target.
9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving the maintenance schedule from a user.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the maintenance schedule specifies that the selecting step and the deleting step are performed automatically at a defined periodic interval or at a plurality of defined times in the future.

11. A machine-readable medium encoded with a program for automatically maintaining a file system, said program containing instructions for performing the steps of:

selecting files from the file system for deletion so as to achieve a predetermined usage level for the file system; and

deleting the files that were selected,

wherein the selecting step and the deleting step are performed automatically according to a maintenance schedule.

12. The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the selecting step includes the sub-steps of:

sorting the files using a sorting algorithm to produce a sorted list of files; and

selecting files beginning at the top of the sorted list until deletion of the selected files would achieve the predetermined usage level for the file system.

13. The machine-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the predetermined usage level specifies a percentage of usage of the file system, an amount of usage of the file system, a percentage by which to reduce usage of the file system, or an amount to reduce usage of the file system.

14. The machine-readable medium of claim 13, wherein said program further contains instructions for performing the step of receiving the predetermined usage level from a user.

15. The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein said program further contains instructions for performing the step of:

receiving a selection of a main target from the user, the main target identifying a portion of the file system that is to be maintained,

wherein the selecting step and the deleting step are performed on the main target.

16. The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein said program further contains instructions for performing the step of receiving the maintenance schedule from the user.

17. The machine-readable medium of claim 16, wherein the maintenance schedule specifies that the selecting step and the deleting step are performed automatically at a defined periodic interval or at a plurality of defined times in the future.

18. A system for automatically maintaining a file system, said system comprising:  
a file selector for selecting files from the file system for deletion so as to achieve a predetermined usage level for the file system; and  
a file remover for deleting the files that were selected,  
wherein the file selector and the file remover automatically operate according to a maintenance schedule.
19. The system of claim 18, wherein the file selector sorts the files using a sorting algorithm to produce a sorted list of files, and selects files beginning at the top of the sorted list until deletion of the selected files would achieve the predetermined usage level for the file system.
20. The system of claim 18, wherein the predetermined usage level specifies a percentage of usage of the file system, an amount of usage of the file system, a percentage by which to reduce usage of the file system, or an amount to reduce usage of the file system.
21. The system of claim 20, further comprising a user interface for receiving the predetermined usage level from a user.

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22. The system of claim 21,  
wherein the user interface also receives a selection of a main target from the user,  
the main target identifying a portion of the file system that is to be maintained, and  
the file selector and the file remover operate on the main target.
23. The system of claim 21, wherein the user interface also receives the maintenance  
schedule from the user.

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